Building a Digital Philanthropy Team
SEIZE THE MOMENT

Agile marketing...

...the practice of marketing in the moment...

...also a powerful fundraising mechanism
The University of Minnesota enjoyed enormous digital fundraising success in winter 2018…

…at both the annual and major giving levels
MARCHING TO BIG FUNDRAISING WINS

- Justin Timberlake invited the marching band to perform during Super Bowl LII
- The U of M’s fundraising team had less than one week to launch the campaign
MARCHING TO BIG FUNDRAISING WINS

During that week:

• A major donor was engaged and a gift given

• The giving site was created

• The marketing and communication plan was built and executed
AGILE FUNDRAISING

• $183,000 Raised – Including the $100,000 major gift

• Almost 700 donors – 110 First-time donors

• 12 new major gift prospects
WHY GO DIGITAL?

• Digital is a HUGE fundraising opportunity (for those who get it right)

• Relevance = timeliness

• Digital increases annual, leadership annual, major, and corporate giving
Major donors

...identifying, cultivating, and stewarding with digital
MORE WEALTH = MORE ONLINE

• 85% of millionaires active on at least one social media network (Fidelity Investments)

• 55% of high income earners use mobile pay …compared to 40% of general population and 52% of Millennials (Accenture)

• Groundwork’s partners are raising six- and seven-figure gifts thanks to digital strategies that include large-gift donors
MEET MIKE FERNANDEZ

There are opportunities all around us, but seeing them is not enough... One needs to take action. Edwin is a remarkable young man and it is people like him who will redefine America! Congratulations and win, thank you FIU and my Partner Earvin.

Mike

Navarro employee gets his MBA funded by owner Mike Fernandez, Magic Johnson, FIU

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WWW.MIAMIHerald.com
MIKE, THE AMBASSADOR

Mike’s online and offline networking meant he could be a highly effective online ambassador…

…so the Miami Children’s team created a campaign just for him
MIKE, THE AMBASSADOR

The Mike Fernandez campaign:

- One major donor
- 30 days
- $1.4 million
  - $1.2 million from large gifts within the donor’s network
  - 75 percent new donor acquisition
MAJOR DONOR-LED ONLINE CAMPAIGNS

Do you have a Mike Fernandez?

Or a Marcus Lemonis?

- $300,000 match led to $1 million raised in 2016
- $1.5 million match led to $3.2 million raised in 2017
DO TRAINING

Build a plan with your fundraisers, to benefit your fundraisers

• Training workshops

• Digitally-enhanced solicitation strategies

• One-on-one coaching and strategizing
DIGITALLY-ENHANCED SOLICITATION STRATEGIES

• Identifying digitally-engaged donors and prospects

• Brainstorming digital engagement strategies

• Matches/challenges, personal fundraising campaigns, video stardom …many options
DO ACTION PLANS

Includes the solicitation strategy elements

Outlines tips for becoming more digitally active
• Social media
• Email and text
• Video production
THE ROLES

A digital philanthropy strategist who can...

• Set the course

• Inspire (and hold accountable) gift officers

• Produce and advance the DO action plans
THE ROLES

A prospect researcher or team who is skilled at mining and digital data...

...and making it actionable
Making “agile” happen

...with the right team
AGILE WORKS

Whether a world-wide event or something that only your alumni connect with…

…agile opens digital doors to fundraising success
AGILE FUNDRAISING TEAM

You’ll need...

...to quickly produce a high volume of video and other visual content
AGILE FUNDRAISING TEAM

You’ll need…

…a nimble communications plan that can adjust to the news of the day and how it relates to your institution
You’ll need…

…a major gifts team that knows how to make future-based asks (or has donors ready for breaking events)
THE ROLES

Hiring priority:

Video producers who can turn around a high volume of content quickly
THE ROLES

Hiring priority:

Engaged communicators and social media strategists who can react and change course quickly
THE ROLES

Hiring priority:

Development officers who can leverage real-time fundraising opportunities
Video and peer-to-peer

...worth the investment
VIDEO REIGNS SUPREME

57% of everyone who watches a nonprofit’s video…

…goes on to give to that nonprofit.¹

¹ Google study
72 percent of donors say they stop donating because of “poor, vague, or irrelevant” content.

Source: Abila Donor Loyalty Study
Email conversion-to-gift rates:

- Online ambassadors – 25%
- Organization – 0.8%

Known sender emails from ambassadors are 312 times more effective at securing a gift than the exact same email with the org as sender.

Source: Blackbaud TeamRaiser Data
STUDENT CONTENT TEAM

A team of approximately four to six students…

• With the ability to produce and star in authentic video

• Who can manage new SCT social media accounts
  • Facebook
  • Twitter
  • Instagram
The key is finding students with charisma…

…personalities your constituents will connect with and remember
It’s about developing student philanthropy-based personalities throughout the year...

...creating a relationship between the students and alumni via online channels
STUDENT CONTENT TEAM

With students, we are...

• Adding a personalized, video element to the emails that gets noticed and leads to giving

• Keeping the mission front and center – our students

• Giving donors access to students – much like the call centers of old, but with a new, modern twist
MAKING PEER-TO-PEER WORK

When ambassadors share our content, amazing things happen…

…but simply emailing a mass list and asking them to share does not equal a successful ambassador program.
MAKING PEER-TO-PEER WORK

Democratize it

Work with units to cultivate five to 20+ online ambassadors

Provide central leadership and support …but mostly stay out of the way
MAKING PEER-TO-PEER WORK

The unit level is better equipped…

• To appropriately steward and incentivize

• To feature ambassadors in content

• For one-to-one ambassador engagement (for VIPs and major gift donors)
VIDEO AND PEER-TO-PEER ROLES

Hire students (just like you do callers)

Hire video fundraising strategists to lead the students

Charge a central person or team with providing support for unit managers leading the grassroots ambassador program
NEXT STEPS...

- Commit to more video – this means resources (new or reallocated)
- Add digital to your major gifts program – be sure gift officers are deeply involved
- Go agile and get more video with a Student Content Team
- Grow an ambassador program at both the unit and central levels